

Math Counts

Anthony rang the buzzer and answered the question. It was an easy one about the area of a circle. His Math Counts team had been breezing through the competition, thanks to him and Lena. Noah was there too, but he hadn't answered one thing.

The next question was an algebraic equation to solve. Lena loved algebra. She buzzed in right away. Still nothing from Noah.

Anthony elbowed Noah. "Aren't you going to answer?"

"Sorry," mumbled Noah. "I'm not great with the buzzer."

Anthony sighed. They needed all three members of the team to be strong players if they had a chance of winning. He knew Noah was smart, but he seemed to get nervous when they played for real. He was fine in practice. But of course in practice they just slapped the table - no buzzers.

During the break, Anthony was grumpy. Without all of them answering, they'd probably lose. "Noah, you've got to step up, dude," said Anthony.

Lena pulled him aside. "I'm not sure your attitude is helping Noah," she said.

"I guess not," said Anthony. "But I don't know how to help."

"I have an idea," said Lena. She went over to talk with Noah. Anthony wondered what they were planning.

When the match started up again, the first question was about perimeter. Anthony added up the sides of the figure quickly in his head. He buzzed in just in time to answer.

Lena answered another algebra question correctly. But then they missed four in a row. They were going to lose for sure.

Anthony shook his head, but Lena just smiled. “Be patient,” she said.

When the next question came, Anthony was stumped. It was some long word problem, and he got lost just reading it off the monitor. Lena looked equally confused.

Then, just as Anthony gave up, Noah tapped Lena on the elbow. She buzzed. Noah answered. He was correct! The team scored the point.

“See,” Lena whispered. “We only had to come up with a system. Noah can contribute too. We just have to believe in him.”

Anthony clapped Noah on the shoulder. “Great job, bro,” he said.

Noah smiled. For the rest of the game he tapped Lena or Anthony whenever he knew the answer and they buzzed for him. With the team working together, they were sure to win first place.



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NAME: _____ DATE: _____

1. Who answered all the algebra questions?
 - a. Noah
 - b. Lena
 - c. Anthony
 - d. They missed all the algebra ones

2. Why was Noah not helping at first?
 - a. He wasn't good with the buzzer
 - b. He wasn't good at math
 - c. He didn't like Anthony and Lena
 - d. He didn't care about the competition

3. How do you think Noah felt when Anthony told him he had to do better?
 - a. Stressed
 - b. Nervous
 - c. Ashamed
 - d. All of the above

4. Why do you think Lena's plan to help Noah worked?
 - a. Because she believed in him
 - b. Because she pressured him
 - c. Because he liked Lena
 - d. Because he wanted to impress Anthony

Instructions for teachers:

These questions can be used to assess understanding of the reading passage.

The item in bold is the correct answer for each question.

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